

NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF LENGETIA FARM, MAU NAROK
FROM THE DIARIES OF THE LATE P.H.B. SESSIONS
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In his paper on the birds of Lengetia Farm, in the western highlands of Kenya, Sessions (1966) summarised five years of almost daily observations. These regular notes from diverse habitats at c.3000 m (9000-10000 ft.) were continued until 1975, and in happier circumstances would no doubt have appeared as an addendum. Rather than see these extensive notes wasted, Pat's widow Vanda asked me to select and publish any interesting records. As space is limited I have included only those 40 species (marked *) unrecorded by Sessions (1966) and a few other miscellaneous items of particular interest.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

- * *PLEGADIS FALCINELLUS* Glossy Ibis
Three on 19 May 1967 and one on 30 January 1972.
- ANAS CAPENSIS* Cape Wigeon
Two on 13 April 1966 and 9 June 1972, and one on 21 September 1968.
These provide further evidence of wandering to fresh water.
- ANAS CLYPEATA* Shoveler
Dates extend from 17 October to 18 May.
- * *ANAS CRECCA* Teal
Females, with full descriptions, 4 October 1970 and 18 November 1970.
- ANAS PENELOPE* Wigeon
Male, 30 January 1971.
- NETTA ERYTHROPTALMA* Southern Pochard
Small numbers, August to March.
- * *NETTAPUS AURITUS* Pygmy Goose
Male and Female, 10 January 1970.
- * *THALASSORNIS LEUCONOTUS* White-backed Duck
One, 16-20 November 1966; two on 2 November 1970 and 9 May 1971.
- * *AQUILA WAHLBERGI* Wahlberg's Eagle
One, 9 February 1972.
- * *AVICEDA CUCULOIDES* Cuckoo Falcon
One, 4 July 1970.
- * *KAUPIFALCO MONOGRAMMICUS* Lizard Buzzard
One, 29 September 1973.
- FALCO AMURENSIS* Eastern Red-footed Falcon
All records are listed as none have been given with individual dates previously: adult males on 15 November 1962, 31 March 1965, 26 April 1967 (3); a sub-adult male in December 1963; a sub-adult male with a female on 14 December 1974.
- * *FALCO PEREGRINUS* Peregrine Falcon
Sessions (1966) listed this species in square brackets, but later

had definite sightings on 2 January 1970, 17 April 1972, 7 June 1973 and 5 September 1974. The first of these was seen at rest. Being larger and stockier than others, with underparts described as 'pinkish buff only lightly barred' and a dark head, it was probably a *Palae-arctic* migrant of the race *calidus*.

- * *CREX CREX* Corncrake
One, 30 November 1967.
- * *PORPHYRIO PORPHYRIO* Purple Gallinule
one, 1 May - 14 June 1969
- * *RALLUS CAERULESCENS* African Water Rail
One, 22 November 1973
- * *ROSTRATULA BENGHALENSIS* Painted Snipe
One, 9 August 1971.
- * *VANELLUS ARMATUS* Blacksmith Plover
Singles, 25 December 1969, 27 February 1972, and two on 6 July 1972.
- * *VANELLUS LUGUBRIS* Senegal Plover
One, 21 January 1967.
- * *VANELLUS SPINOSUS* Spur-winged Plover
One, very tame, 29 November 1966.
- GALLINAGO MEDIA* Great Snipe
Dates not given in full previously: 15 December 1960, 22 February 1962, 8 March 1962.
- TRINGA OCHROPUS* Green Sandpiper
Early date: 12 August 1965, 16 August 1967 (3), 18 July 1971 (3), 7 August 1973.
- * *COLUMBA GUINEA* Speckled Pigeon
Up to 6, 21 January 1973 - 3 January 1974.
- STREPTOPELIA CAPICOLA* Ring-necked Dove
Sessions (1966) listed this as a recent colonist from the east, breeding in small numbers, whereas the Dusky Turtle Dove *S. lugens* was a very common breeding resident, sometimes congregating in flocks of 100-200. By 1975 *capicola* outnumbered *lugens* all over Mau Narok.
- * *CHRYSOCCYX KLAAS* Klaas' Cuckoo
Singles, 20 August 1974, 8 December 1974, 19 December 1974.
- * *CUCULUS SOLITARIUS* Red-chested Cuckoo
Singles, 11 April 1966, 30 April 1967, 30 September 1968.
- CAPRIMULGUS EUROPAEUS* Eurasian Nightjar
It may be mainly a spring passage migrant as evidenced by birds examined in the hand on 29 March 1961, 2 April 1965, 9 March 1971 and 15 March 1974.
- * *APUS AFFINUS* Little Swift
One, 6 January 1974.

APALODERMA NARINA Narina's Trogon
Sessions (1966) did not record it after March 1961; subsequently

seen on 20 December 1966, 24 October 1968, 15 and 30 April 1972.

- * *TRACHYLAEMUS PURPURATUS* Yellow-billed Barbet
One shot on a neighbouring farm at Mau Narok by Ian Philip on 1 September 1968 was examined by Sessions.
- * *ANDROPADUS LATIROSTRIS* Yellow-whiskered Greenbul
First recorded on 28 December 1966 and subsequently on several dates.
- * *MONTICOLA SAXATILIS* Rock Thrush
Male, 5 April 1973.
- * *OENANTHE ISABELLINA* Isabelline Wheatear
One, 2 November 1967.
- * *SAXICOLA RUBETRA* Whinchat
17 December 1966, 3 April 1967, 8 October 1967, 12 October 1967, 25 February 1968, 7 March 1969, 29 September 1972, 30 September 1975.
- PHYLLOSCOPUS COLLYBITA* Chiffchaff
Singing on 30 December 1967, 11 February 1973(2), 19 February 1974 (several), 29 March 1974, 12 February 1975.
- * *SYLVIA BORIN* Garden Warbler
One 29 March 1974.
- * *SYLVIA COMMUNIS* Whitethroat
Singles, 1 December 1968, 24 March 1971.
- * *BATIS MOLITOR* Chin-spot Batis
One, 24 December 1974
- * *MOTACILLA ALBA* White Wagtail
On a neighbouring farm on 14 February 1971, and 23 January - 1 February 1973 (2).
- * *MALACONOTUS BLANCHOTI* Grey-headed Bush Shrike
One, 2 February 1974.
- * *MALACONOTUS SULPHUREOPECTUS* Sulphur-breasted Bush Shrike
One, 1 December 1974.
- * *LANIUS EXCUBITORIUS* Grey-backed Fiscal
One, 7 April 1969
- * *SPREO SUPERBUS* Superb Starling
One, 30 November 1974; an earlier record at shops in Mau Narok on 5 April 1965 was not included by Sessions (1966).
- * *NECTARINIA OLIVACEA* Olive Sunbird
One singing on 16 March 1972.
- * *NECTARINIA VENUSTA* Variable Sunbird
Male in full breeding dress, 22 February - 11 March 1970.
- * *PLOCEUS RUBIGINOSUS* Chestnut Weaver
Male in garden, June 1972.
- * *PASSER IAGOENSIS* Kenya Rufous Sparrow
First recorded on 20 May 1972; bred successfully in June 1972, May 1973 and February 1974.

- * *VIDUA MACROURA* Pin-tailed Whydah
Two males in full breeding plumage on 5 October 1973.
- * *VIDUA PARADISAEA* Long-tailed Paradise Whydah
Undated, on another farm at Mau Narok.
- * *LONCHURA CUCULLATA* Bronze Mannikin
One 22 December 1971.
- * *EMBERIZA FLAVIVENTRIS* Golden-breasted Bunting
One, 21 February 1967

REFERENCES

- SESSIONS, P.H.B. 1966. Notes on the birds of Lengetia Farm, Mau Narok. *Journal of the East Africa Natural History Society*. 26(113): 18-48.

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